

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

113
1-7558
100-14110
Choosing the Electric Range

A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, Mr. Paul C. Woodbridge, Rural Electrification Administration, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, April 16, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 92 associate radio stations.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

- - - - -

ANNOUNCER:

Here we are in Washington. And as usual on the Farm and Home Hour on Tuesdays, we have Miss Ruth Van Deman with us. And today as usual I think she brings news from the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

And Mr. Paul Woodbridge here is going to do the same for the Rural Electrification Administration.

ANNOUNCER:

Ah - more electrified farm homes --- more light over kitchen sinks --- more electric motors to do the family wash ---

PAUL C. WOODBRIDGE:

You seem to know a great deal about the R.E.A.

ANNOUNCER:

All I know is what I read in the papers.

VAN DEMAN:

And hear over the radio.

ANNOUNCER:

Best of all, Miss Van Deman, is when you bring samples of the food you're broadcasting about --- so we can taste as we listen. That roast turkey, for instance, --- boy!

VAN DEMAN:

Mr. Woodbridge, maybe we missed it today --- not bringing over an electric range --- so we could put the finger on all the different items about a range, as we talk.

WOODBRIDGE:

If we had perhaps we could be more practical. But of course so far R.E.A.'s big initial job has been to help farm people get the lines built to carry the current to the kitchen range.

VAN DEMAN:

Naturally. And I've heard how you work --- chiefly with farmers' cooperatives. The cooperative groups borrow the money from R.E.A. to build the lines.

How many farm homes was it you told me the other day have been electrified that way?

WOODBRIDGE:

Nearly half a million. Of course that's counting the farms that will soon

(Over)

April 16, 1940

have electricity from R.E.A. financed lines as well as those now served. And as perhaps you know the number of farm homes with electricity has doubled in the last five years.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, it's no wonder we get such a flood of questions about all kinds of electric equipment --- what to look for in buying.

WOODBIDGE:

This new pamphlet you have here on the electric range is going to be a big help. This looks to me like seven pages of good common sense. I'm glad to see you put safety first, among the factors important in the selection of an electric range.

VAN DEMAN:

The Underwriters' Laboratories do a good job on that. They test equipment for many manufacturers --- test it for shock and fire hazards --- and put their label on it if it meets certain standards.

WOODBIDGE:

Yes, the Underwriters' Laboratories do a valuable service. We'd like to see every woman who buys a piece of electric equipment for the farm home check on that safety label first.

VAN DEMAN:

Even before she looks at the price tag?

WOODBIDGE:

Well it's not a bad idea.

VAN DEMAN:

The price tags on electric ranges read very differently, as you well know. The more accessories the higher the cost generally.

WOODBIDGE:

I know women like style and accessories. But my friends, the hard-boiled engineers, say that some of the plainer, less dressy ranges cook just as well.

VAN DEMAN:

We agree, absolutely. Look at this list of points here on page 2 --- points influencing price.

WOODBIDGE:

"Size --- weight," I see come first. Then "amount of insulation --- number and arrangement of cooking units." ---

VAN DEMAN:

And so on down to the peppers and salts and the lights in the oven.

WOODBIDGE:

As an amateur chef to a professional, those lights that flash on when you open the oven door are very convenient. I can see when the pie's done before I take it out.

April 16, 1940

VAN DEMAN:

Surely. But it's a lot more convenient, don't you think, to have an oven big enough to bake two pies and a pan of rolls at the same time, or a whole oven meal.---

WOODBIDGE:

Surely. But almost everybody has to make some compromise in choosing a major piece of equipment like an electric range. It's a toss-up between the ideal and what will fit into a particular spot in a particular kitchen and do the job for the family in that particular home.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, even down to a detail like the arrangement of oven and broiler ---

WOODBIDGE:

Broiler. To me that means steaks and chops.

VAN DEMAN:

Just the way oven meant pie --- I noticed. Well, to a woman who does much cooking the broiler can mean a lot of things.

In a table-top type of range with only one heating unit in the oven, the space for broiling is at the bottom --- almost down to the floor.

WOODBIDGE:

You have to stand on your head fairly, to turn the steak.

VAN DEMAN:

Exactly. In an oven with two units the broiler comes at the top. And some have separate broiling compartments, so you can bake and broil at the same time.

WOODBIDGE:

Handy of course when you are doing much broiling.

VAN DEMAN:

Very. Especially in a farm home where the family is running a tourist business on the side --- serving broiled chicken dinners to people who stop as they're driving by.

WOODBIDGE:

In a case like that, the electric range can simplify the whole cooking job tremendously. You turn the switch, set the thermostat where you want it ---

VAN DEMAN:

By the way, some thermostat dials are easier to read than others. And some switches easier to turn.

WOODBIDGE:

Yes, that's a point to watch for. Thermostat dials should be conveniently placed and plainly marked. And the switch buttons should be of a shape you can grasp firmly, so your fingers won't slip off when you try to turn them.

VAN DEMAN:

A woman always looks carefully at the surface units on the top of the stove --- to see how many pots and kettles she can use at one time.

WOODBIDGE:

Three, I believe, is the number of surface units most farm women seem to want.

VAN DEMAN:

At least three, spaced far enough apart to take good-sized kettles. And one a large unit of 1800 or more watts.

WOODBIDGE:

I suppose you know the cooking units on practically all the 1940 models are the enclosed type.

VAN DEMAN:

Good. They're easier to clean.

WOODBIDGE:

And last longer. They cost a little more to replace. But in the long run the enclosed unit seems to be the most satisfactory type.

VAN DEMAN:

Back for a moment to the question of current to operate the electric range. What about electric cooking cost on R.E.A. lines?

WOODBIDGE:

Figuring that the average farm family uses about 120 kilowatt hours a month, the cooking costs will run approximately four dollars.

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Lots of city families pay more than that for gas.

VAN DEMAN:

That sounds like Wallace Kadderly's voice. I didn't know he was around.

KADDERLY:

Around? --- Oh, yes, I'm always around --- well practically always.

VAN DEMAN:

You're just in time to take over with this mimeograph on electric ranges. --- the follow-up, you know, for those who like to see as well as hear.

KADDERLY:

Yes, yes, with pleasure. (Ad lib offer of "The Electric Range: Points to Look for in Selecting").

~~SECRET~~